

Old Hickory

April, 1970

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Vol. 2, No. 1

REVIEW



This issue:

THE JACKSON SYMPHONY

COLLEGE POETRY CONTEST WINNERS

THE POETRY OF MALTA

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Old Hickory **REVIEW**

Vol. 2, No. 1

April, 1970

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comment

The revival of interest in creative writing in Tennessee and in West Tennessee in particular, mentioned in the last issue of the "Old Hickory Review", is picking up more and more steam, to judge by the large amount of work submitted for this number by aspiring writers. The editors are very happy about this. It must mean that our periodical may truly be achieving its avowed purpose: to encourage new writers by giving them a chance to be published.

The editors are sorry that due to limits of space, much poetry and a number of stories could not be accepted. Keep writing, however, and keep sending your work! Poems may be of any length. Stories and articles should be limited to 2,000 words.

* * *

As a part of the Coordinated Community Arts Program of the Jackson Arts Council, the "Old Hickory Review" will feature the activities of members of the Council. This issue salutes the Jackson Symphony Orchestra, now in its tenth season. Its story should inspire the formation of similar orchestras in other small cities, bringing their citizens the advantages of live, quality music.

* * *

Through a perceptive article by Memphis poet, Kenneth Beaudoin, the "Old Hickory Review" extends a welcome across the Atlantic to a group of young poets on the Mediterranean islands of Malta. Greetings to these inspired voices from this ancient country, but very young nation. We hope to hear more from them.

* * *

Three widely known poets, members of the Memphis Branch of the Poetry Society of Tennessee, Frieda DORIS, Robert SIMonton and Eve BRADen, have created a new verse form for poetry, the DORSIMBRA, which takes its name from its originators. The new form combines the first four lines or quatrain of the Shakespearean sonnet with four lines of free verse, followed by a concluding four lines in blank verse. The first and last lines are identical, serving to bracket and unify the poem. The changing verse form creates an effect resembling musical movements in miniature.

Examples of the Dorsimbra are printed in this issue. As far as the editors are aware this is a first appearance of this form in print.

* * *

The Poetry Society of Tennessee, the editors are told, is planning to field at least six teams of readers of six persons each to tour the state, aided by a grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission, beginning in July. The teams will conduct concert readings and workshops in poetry in public schools, colleges and before civic groups of all kinds. Team members will donate their time. The Tennessee Arts Commission will pay travel costs. Appearances will be free to all groups requesting the programs. For reservations and other information, contact Kenneth L. Beaudoin, 1298 Jefferson Ave., Memphis, Tennessee 38104.

* * *

Those interested in attending the Second Tennessee Writers Conference on the campus of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, July 10, 11, and 12, should write for information immediately to Tennessee Writers' Conference, Box 75, Station B, Vanderbilt University, 37203. A distinguished staff assures a conference as stimulating as the first one.

* * *

The Jackson Writers Group announces the winners of the second poetry contest conducted in the four Jackson colleges. The first prize winner and honorable mention winners at each school are published in this issue. The judges, members of the Poetry Society of Tennessee, state that the quality of this year's submissions is superior to last year's entries, indicating a more serious interest in the business of writing. We salute our young college poets. Our pages will continue to be open to their efforts.

The Editors

JACKSON'S DECADE OF THE SYMPHONY

"I was looking for a small or medium size city where the people loved music enough that starting a symphony orchestra might be a possibility," said James Petty, musician and band teacher, in explaining why he came to the city of Jackson, Tennessee. Soon after his arrival in 1960 as instructor at Tigrett Junior High School, he began talking of a community symphony orchestra. The idea began to take hold among musicians and music lovers generally. Although Jackson was a city of less than 40,000 population and no one could be sure of enough public interest, Jim made it all seem possible.

A series of meetings resulted in an application to the State of Tennessee for a charter. The first announcement to the public appeared in the Jackson Sun, June 25, 1961. When the charter was received, an organization was formed called the Jackson Symphony Association and the first officers were elected: Dr. C. Leon Holmes, a minister, President; Dr. J. M. Phillips, a physician, Vice-President; Thompson Dabney, a merchant, Secretary; George C. Jackson, a banker, Treasurer and James Petty, Conductor.

The orchestra's first executive committee was therefore composed of successful professional and business leaders and the Jackson Symphony was off to a good start as a community endeavor. Its continued vigor is undoubtedly due to this continued community involvement. Succeeding presidents of the Symphony, for example have been Dr. J. M. Phillips; Hewitt P. Tomlin, Jr., an attorney; T. Ray Jones, hospital administrator; Dr. James S. Wilder, college president; Baxter Smith, business man; Dr. F. E. Wright, college president; and the present head, Dr. M. E. Coy, an osteopath.

It is one thing, however, to organize and get a charter and quite a greater undertaking to find the money, attend to a hundred details of promotion and management and finally to rehearse and produce a live performing symphony orchestra all within the time between July and November 6, 1961, when the orchestra made its bow to the public. Yet it was done and the first concert was a very creditable performance of Dvorjak's Symphony No. 4 in G Major, Op. 88, Moussorgsky-Ravel's "Picture at an Exhibition", and Robert Russell Bennett's arrangement of Frederick Lowe's selections from "My Fair Lady".

James Petty, doubling as conductor and manager, had the courage and stamina as well as the professional training and experience needed to lead the infant orchestra. He received his B. Mus. degree from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in 1950, a B. Sc. in Education from the College-Conservatory of Music of Cincinnati in 1951, a M. Mus. from the same institution in 1956 and has completed residency requirements for the doctorate at the School of Music, Indiana University. He was Assistant Conductor on the staff at Indiana

University and founded and conducted the Mississippi College-Community Orchestra, Clinton, Mississippi. He studied conducting under Frank Simon and Peter Froelich at the Cincinnati Conservatory. While there he was a member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and a protege of Thor Johnson, its conductor. At Indiana, he studied under opera conductors Wolfgang Vacano and Tiber Kozma. In addition he has performed with a number of out of state orchestras and won a number of honors.

The musicians who composed the first year's orchestra, and this is still typical of its make-up today after nine years, come from local colleges, both faculty and students, from amateur and professional musicians in Jackson and from as far away as Memphis, Nashville, Murray, Kentucky and other surrounding cities of the area and from local high school band students. From the beginning, the orchestra has contained high school students. The Association has been interested in encouraging youngsters in their musical careers. Out of its rather tight budget, it has given musical scholarships annually. More than 400 such scholarships have now been given. At present 27 young people of high school and college age are in the scholarship program. Former members of the Jackson Symphony are now playing with the Evansville Philharmonic, the Cincinnati Symphony, the Nashville Symphony, the Memphis Symphony and many others.

Financial support for the symphony has come from several sources. Among the first large individual contributors was Mrs. C. E. Pigford, well known for her philanthropies, who gave a large block of stock. The City of Jackson has made an annual contribution, at first \$2500, varying from year to year, and presently \$1,400.

The major source of income is the annual membership drive, which now is holding steady at about 850 members. Subscription for the four concert season was at first \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 for students, which has since been increased to \$10.00 and \$5.00. Blocks of tickets are sold to Jackson State Community College, Lambuth College, Lane College and Union University, and also to a number of local business organizations.

Voting memberships in the corporation are for Patrons \$30.00, Sponsors, \$50.00 and Benefactors \$100.00 or more.

The orchestra presents an open-air pops concert each summer on the campus of Lambuth College, a fellow member of the Jackson Arts Council, which is attended by some two thousand, most of them non-members of the symphony. They bring their children, chairs and blankets. The Symphony supporters sell hot-dogs, hamburgers, soda pop, ice cream and balloons as well as charging a small entry fee to the roped-off college quadrangle. The Jackson Art Association cooperates with an outdoor art show. This performance has become a local highlight of the summer. People who never otherwise would hear the symphony come to enjoy the music under the stars and no

one seems to mind the kids and the view filled with balloons. Last summer (1969) the featured performer was Jacksonian Carl Perkins who sang his "Blue Suede Shoes" to a special arrangement by conductor Petty. This performance is now producing \$1,100 to \$1,200 in revenue.

In 1962, the Jackson Symphony League was formed with Mrs. Robert J. Barnett, wife of a physician who plays the French horn in the orchestra, as president. This large and dedicated group of women have given generous support to the symphony, beginning with some \$600 the first year and now \$3,000 last season. Their principal effort is the Jackson Symphony Ball, held at the Jackson Golf and Country Club.

The Jackson Symphony Association was one of the founding members of the Jackson Arts Council and has been represented on its Board of Directors each year. As a part of the Coordinated Community Arts Program of the Council, the symphony applied for and received from the Tennessee Arts Commission a matching-funds grant of \$1,000 in 1967-68 and \$2,000 in 1968-69. Under the latter grant, the Symphony will hold an extra concert in the Jackson Coliseum in May, open to the public, which will feature Norma Zimmer of the Lawrence Welk Show, the purpose being to attract and increase the number of people who hear the symphony.

From all the above sources, the Symphony Association now receives some \$20,000 as compared to the first budget of scarcely more than \$2,500. This increased budget has meant more and better guest performers, a larger orchestra and more rehearsals. There are now generally two full rehearsals for each performance and the quality of the musicianship grows more polished with each concert.

The tenth season of the Jackson Symphony promises to be its finest. It is now an established part of the cultural life of the community, in close support of the public school system and the four Jackson colleges. It has received excellent support from the Jackson public and from surrounding towns. Now an orchestra of 65 musicians, it is capable of performing well all types of music from the classics to arrangements from musical comedy.

Under the "Goals for Jackson", a master plan for the development of the city sponsored by the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce, also a member of the Jackson Arts Council, goals should be set for the future of the Symphony. Some of these might be: 1. organized continuing financial backing from the commercial and manufacturing interests of the community in recognition of the symphony's obvious commercial value to Jackson; 2. larger financial aid from local government out of the public tax money in recognition of the orchestra's great cultural value to Jackson; 3. funds to pay a full-time conductor; 4. funds to enlarge the membership of the orchestra and make possible more rehearsals; 5. employment of an instructor in stringed instruments jointly by Jackson's colleges; 6. eventually a "home" for the

symphony either in a civic center or in a comprehensive art center. Jim Petty has shown that the seeming impossible is not impossible. The future of the Jackson Symphony challenges the entire community.

Meanwhile an excellent community symphony continues devotedly to do "its thing", the performing of beautiful music—which has moved at least one member of the Jackson Writers Group to poetry. Her poem follows, dedicated in enjoyment, to the Jackson Symphony.

Eddie Lee Anthony Smith

BEAUTY ABSOLUTE

At the Symphony

It is Concerto Number 2, Opus 21.

The orchestra plays Larghetto—

In lyrical movement,

Chopin pleads with lovely Constantia
never to forget him.

The violins whisper together,
the piano pleads passionately.

Purpose and prophecy
are soon lost—

only longing and hope live on.

Suddenly the orchestra unfolds,
widens time and space.

Below and above all doubts
rings joy—

and echoes of joy, freed
of earth and consciousness—

BEAUTY ABSOLUTE—

hanging on a thread of light,
harmony of stars,
essence of grace!

NOTE ON SOME YOUNG MALTESE POETS

Though a relatively small group of islands with a land area smaller than that of Shelby County, and a population of only 300,000 Malta is a land with a long history reaching back into the European Megalithic period when between 2000 BC and 1300 BC a Megalithic culture flourished there leaving the remains of great Megalithic temples to mystify the later inhabitants because of their resemblance to the ancient remains at Stonehenge.

And again Malta nurtured another culture when during the Crusades and until Malta was taken by Napoleon at the beginning of the 19th Century Malta and its strategic ports were the Headquarters of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, the Knights Hospitaliers, and while they were in residence Malta became a melting pot for people from all over the world. And as the anthropologist Linton says, when peoples come in contact with each other, anywhere, they may fight, or they may not; they may change due to contact or they may not; but one thing that they can be depended on to do is interbreed.

Since the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, Malta has been used as a Mediterranean Naval Base by the British, and the present day Maltese have been greatly influenced by British tastes. As a Nation the Maltese are only about as old as we are; and their National literature is about as old as ours. However, their strange language, which Victor Fenech describes as a mixture of Semitic and Romance languages is as old as they are, for the true Maltese has his roots deep in the ancient past.

And this, of course, is part of the delight of reading the young Maltese poet, who is usually bi-lingual and can translate his own poems from Maltese into English, and who often like Victor Fenech, and Francis J. Ebejer, son of Malta's leading playwright and novelist, have been schooled in England. The other delight to be derived from their poetry is to be able to observe how close in spirit they are to ourselves, and to realize in the last analysis how much real spiritual unity there is in all of the Western World. The feeling of the land is well demonstrated in the excerpt below from a poem by Francis J. Ebejer, son of Malta's leading playwright, who presently lives in Southampton, England, with his maternal grandparents. For him the ancient megalithic temples are nostalgic shelters. From his poem, WHITE STONE WORK ENCLOSSES ME . . .

..... another photo comes
To mind—of ancient white stoned
Maltese Megalithic temples with

Primitive irregular shapes joined—
The photo of the stone markers taken from above
And I have to take myself, transport
Myself, down, down among those rocks
to be sheltered, enclosed

. If I look or think above the stone work, I get
the feeling of large spaces, cool blue spaces,
Great width and breadth and height, sea
And sky, that the Maltese island, is small
From above, surrounded by cool, blue
Sunny, rippled sea-sky, the high distant
Sound of a jet cutting the blue.
The White Maltese stonework forming
Nooks and notches and hollows and brooms
And ancient dead rooms, especially of the
Megalithic temples, shelter me, enclose
Me from the spaces, the far seeming
Blowing wind which blows around the
Nook of old you are sheltering behind and
Which blows on you as soon as you emerge,
Old, belonging to the past, but fresh
Reflecting great space and time; old
Belonging to the past, but fresh, more
Like this to your mind when you are
Sheltering behind the nook of old—
White stone work encloses me.

And the megalithic temples figure too in the work of Doreen Micallef, a young poet and playwright from Valetta, the capital of Malta, whose play *FACE TO FACE* won the gold star award for the best play in the National Dramatic competitions in Malta this year., and in the excerpt below from her long poem *WHEN THE GLARE CAME*, she writes of the old gods:

*For now is the hour of the glare,
of the twilight suddenly ablaze.*

The shadow divinities circling around me
are dissolving . . . dissolving? . . . the gods dissolving?
Where are they gone, those gods of yesterday
and supposedly of today and tomorrow?
They who were wont to board it over me,
circling around me in order to guard me,
those senile gods, the shadows of twilight?
Where are they gone, where unto dissolved,
those senile gods supposedly guarding me?
The door now lies shattered in fragments
and the gale is descending upon me,
on me alone, on me and my existence.
My fingers still seek . . . seek the gods,

the sublime gods, the senile shadows
who, before the glare came, were—and werenot.

But other young poets like Kenneth Wain sing their stark songs against their times like so many of our own angry young men. Below is Kenneth Wain's
ON EXPERIENCING REVELATION:

being tall
 sentries over the plains
 with wires guarding nothingness
 infant's clenched fist
 open shell with meat
 torn out of socket
having euphoric views
 cats in the brazilian jungles of paris
 squashed heads squat bodies
 regurgitating mud
 mud mud mud of ecstasy
in each man a wish for martyrdom,
 of consumptive chests wheezing in the sun
and dylan thomas writing poems on a toilet seat
 sing i may with a choir of
 tall vultures
 in the mass hysteria of
 void music of eliot's throngs
from now—seriousness is the
hallmark of the living
the dead being tall
stretchout and give the world its bone structure
young poets and soldiers buried underground
 may their graves sprout tall flowers.

Or like Victor Agius in his poem PERCEPTION, they re-evaluate the meanings of their times.

Looking into . . .

the opaque, yet realistic future . . .
the vast, universal, infinite spatial vacuum . . .
the ethereal, sapphiric, earthly crust . . .

I perceive . . .

a mile-long road of dead oceans . . .
a million snowdrops hailing the morning mist . . .
a thousand fields with fresh-sown lilacs . . .
a minute, idealistic philosophy imprisoned in chains . . .
a delirium of trellis etching technological progress . . .
a flaming river of stale blooded revolution . . .

Looking into . . .

the depths of the human soul . . .

I perceive . . .

man's loneliness soaked in desert suns and sands . . .
man's emptiness oscillating in shimmering seawaves . . .

Looking into . . . man's forgetfulness born in imaginary wonderlands . . .
 the void of two blind eyes . . .
 I perceive . . . an inhuman, frantic grip on the walls of a utopia . . .
 a symbolic dream of today's hallucination . . .

One of the most vital of the younger talents of Malta is Victor Fenech, who is editor of "il polz" Malta's literary magazine whose pages are open to the work of the young Maltese poets. He too, has let the landscape enter his poems, as in his poem:

APOCALYPSE

drip, drip, drip
 the blood of thorns and thistles
 on the lily alpine white.

The filthy eagle
 plucks the bastard's eye
 and flings it to the wind
 which creeps in solemn murmur
 over purple seas,

the endless pitter patter
 of ennuic rain stir
 the sad snakes of Medusa
 that eat through the water
 at Narcissus face.

the horses wrapped in mystery thunder
 across the decahedron sky
 and having passed

all else is silence.

And of course one of the most brilliant of the young Maltese poets, is Mario Azzopardi, a young Maltese School teacher, poet, associated as well with the Maltese National Theatre. In such poems as: WHEN THE LIGHT GOES DOWN, I believe he captures the "esprit" of young Malta.

when the light goes down
 and the crucifix above my bed yawns
 the sleep and the ennui of a fruitless redemption
 I hear the rocks of my soul creaking
 in terror
 and I have nightmares of my life
 a stream of sour wine
 appollo 10 a metallic prophet heralding heights
 scratching the feet of the proud kingdom
 but the faint flicker of the light

dances helplessly throwing cross-eyed negatives
on the walls of my butchered soul.

When the light goes down
and the crucifix above my head yawns
dishearteningly with every new moon
I hear myself drawing deep breaths of suffocation
I entangle myself
a primitive embryo
biting its knees.

Here we have a new group of people using English to my mind more freshly, evocatively than many other groups of poets using the language. Here on an old island whose poets are tied to its rocky landscape and ancient history we find young poets confronted with the fact of the atom bomb, and Apollo 10, a bit confused, a bit fearful, questioning their ancient gods, and looking into a stormy future just as we find young poets in America shaken by an uncertain future. Though they do not suggest any answers, the young poets at least, confront one with the naked questions of our times.

Frieda Dorris, Robert Simonton, Eve Braden

Dorsimbra: ALONG THE SEASHORE

We walked along the seashore, side by side—
Sun-happy, sand enchanted—unaware
Of brown-skinned surfers rolling with the tide,
Of seagulls circling high in velvet air.

sky-intimate winds
repeat your name—
sands, palm-shadowed
imprison it!

We've witnessed saffron sunsets on the Nile,
Watched moons meander by the Sacre Cour—
These cannot match the glory of that day
We walked along the seashore, side by side.

Frieda Dorris, Robert Simonton, Eve Braden

Dorsimbra: YOUR VOICE WILL COME AGAIN

I know your voice will come to me again
Song-haunted, ghosting sounds of yesterday,
You promised with the strength of many men,
You would return to me—return to stay.

What can one say
of heart break?

run, run—

know another death!

Though stirring rhythms fill my heart with pain,
When I remember promises I could
Not keep, there is some solace in the thought
I know your voice will come to me again.

Robert Simonton

ILLUSIONS

Love passed me by so many times before,
When suddenly it came I did not know
The tears it shed, the many smiles it wore
Were all for me—to take—to reap—to sow.
You reached, with gentle hands, to set me free
So I could know new worlds. But I was blind.
I turned away. And yet your memory
Is walking now through streets within my mind.
You made our music play, our poems rhyme—
For me, these were illusive lures of fate,
Thrust out like meshes in the nets of time
To hide the truth until it was too late.
“Forgive me” echoes with the faintest breath—
For love lies deep beneath the shrouds of death.

MY SISTER

Yesterday . . .

You were sunshine's child,

Barefoot

With dark, shining, morning

Eyes

And brown skin . . .

Holding snake eggs

And a goose's neck.

Today . . .

You are a mother . . .

World worried . . .

Tension tossed,

Streamlining the house,

Burning garbage,

Baking cakes for the

Church

And God knows who . . .

Taking courses in adult education

At Southwestern . . .

Waiting for time to dim the

Luster

Of your still-dark, morning

Eyes.

Isabel J. Glaser

DARK RIVER

Dark river with stalactites
china-white hanging down
the closeness of jungle air
steam ground . . . damp . . .
Turn around; turn around
trace a breathing crack
hide where the driftwood lies
bone-stark, sundried
tumble, slide, and then escape . . .
Prism light and reflected motion
mine is the image trapped
preserved in glass
a species for posterity . . .
Once more the wicked paw
once more the chase
captivity . . . dark river, stagnant slobber
pain . . . so weary and so final
this cat and mouse game.

Helen Thomas Allison

NIGHT RAIN

Tonight it rains, —
A haunting broken song,
A melancholy tune.

The night whips down
Relentless gray sleet,
Slashes of quicksilver.

The night wind brings
The sad, the sweet, —
Remembering.

Raymond McCarty

TO MY GENII

O gather around, my Genii!
Forever hover near.
I need you close, and closer
With each swift-graying year.

I cannot write my lyrics
Except you bring the tune
Complete with words and rhythm
From some forgotten rune.

I cannot sing of beauty
With eloquent refrain
Unless articulation
Accompany the strain.

O gather around, my Genii!
And nevermore depart
The warm and welcome threshold
Of my poetic heart.

Ruth Peal Harrell

A SKETCH IN WERNHER VON BRAUN

count down
beginning
1939

HEIL

discipline &
indoctrination
lifting off
on the
master plan
to conquer
space

to HELL with
obstacles
let them
wear boots
& now first
uncertain
footprints
under stars
& stripes &
moon silt
softening
the swastika
HAIL

Ruth Peal Harrell

FOR A LOOKING GLASS THAT NEEDS
LOOKING INTO

a mirror
measuring
marchers now
dissenters

a tube
shouting
snow now
interference

whatever
happened to
that freedom
channel
performers
since 1776
faded death
to tune in

Helen D. Oellerich

YES, MR. CHANDLER, WE NEED A PEOPLE'S BRIDGE

We need a span of human hands
linked to bridge the gulf
that separates us now
generations, classes, races, nations.

We need men cantilevered against the sky
rigid to current persuasions
steel against sun, rain, mud.

women to structure the arch
determine the stresses
truss the supports, braces, beams.

minds whose tensile strength
disclaim treacherous waters
false ideologies that wash at our piers.

pride with wire cables
binding the best in all our past
suspending factions that sway our abutments.

Vision of concrete reaching to our future
extension through unity
coalesced to mold our tomorrows.

and souls to look where they are going.

college poetry contest winners

Grand Prize Winner, Four Colleges

Jerry Little

Union University

SIGHTINGS

The black moon of tomorrow awaits us.

Note: Melancholy walks the streets.

I

I go near Main Street, and I fear
Cries of convention and cries of dissent
From the fire-filled mouths of collective
individuals.

Everywhere the perfumed septic flows to and from
cracks in the minds of men.
The world can't end today.
It ended yesterday.

II

The pale light of the new dawn is becoming more
visible through the transparent cloud of despair.
Rush forward, my fools! Set up the blockade!
Let not one shining beam reach a single man
And cause him to become himself—
And cause him to say,
“In the beginning . . .”

First Place
Jackson State Community College

Floyd Morrison, Junior

A WORLD OF THINGS; NOTHINGS!

I'm sitting beneath an artificial light,
When I wash my clothes,
They become artificial white.
Down at the park,
I walk on artificial grass
And in the White House,
There is artificial class.
All my life I have traveled
On an artificial road
Which caused me to carry
An artificial load.
I'm writing with an artificial pen
And somewhere down the line,
They created artificial men.
There is one question I sincerely debate,
Why couldn't someone create artificial hate!

Second Place
Jackson State Community College

David Oliver

RABBITS

Rabbits aren't like you and me,
They can resist the radioactivity.
They can survive the mushroomed skies,
But man dies.
They may nibble the glowing grass,
And it may come to pass
That the meek shall inherit the Earth.

First Place
Lambuth College

Karen J. Wood

DESERTED CITIES OF THE MIND

I am born
My mind is free
My soul is unmarred
I know, I feel, I love.

I am grown
My mind is corrupted
My soul is imprisoned
I wonder, I hesitate, I hate.

I am old
My mind is destroyed
My soul is no more
I sit, I look, I do not know.

I am dead
My mind is free
My soul is unmarred
I know, I feel, I love.

Second Place
Lambuth College

Laura Duerr

WHITE SUPREMACY

Ah! sweet, beautiful nature—'tis only a miracle God could fulfill.
But wait! What's this I see?
The wind—harsh and cold—beating on all the unfortunate
 creations in his path.
Blades of grass bowing to the wind's breath,
Trees shedding their tears,
Flowers lying on the ground,
Dust thrown about.
Oh, fierce wind, have mercy on them,
For they are equal to you in their beauty.
Why do you think you are braver, stronger, more beautiful than
 they?
Why do you think you are supreme?
Know you not 'twas He who made you?
—And know you not 'twas He that made them?
So come down off your self-made throne,
Come down where you belong.
For as He made you, likewise He will destroy you.
So come down before it's too late.
They will soon tire of your tyranny
And will stand up and revolt.
The dust will infiltrate your body and blind you,
The trees will block your path,
The flowers and blades of grass will prick your sides.
Slowly you will die—why should they show mercy?
Then when you are beaten,
When peace and brotherhood have been restored,
He, the Creator, will look down upon them.
And He will say, "Well done."

First Place
Lane College

Malcolm T. Gray

LIVING 'N' DYING

Take a man, then put him alone
Put him 12,000 miles away from home
Empty his heart of all but blood.
Make him live in sweat 'n' mud.

This is the life I have to live
And why, my soul to the devil I give
You "Peace Boys" sit in your easy chairs
But you don't know what it's like out there.

You have a ball without near trying
While over here the boys are dying
You burn your draft cards and march at dawn
You plant your flags on the White House lawn.

You want to ban the bomb
You say, "there's no real war in Viet Nam"
Use your flags, your days and have your fun
Then refuse to use your gun.
There's nothing for you to do,
And just think—I'm supposed to die for you.

Second Place
Lane College

Georgia Watkins

INSPECTION

"I've been working hard; I'll take a break
And give my earth a check.
It's been a while since I've seen my children
So I don't know what to expect.

Why, there is litter and rubbish everywhere.
My trees have not been trimmed.
(Maybe I should have given a warning
Before checking up on them).

I see someone is being careless.
The water seems polluted when they finish.
It is dirty now; just look at it,
They do nothing to replenish.

I'd better take a look outside
To get a clearer view.
From the way it looks and smells out there
My air is polluted, too.

Why, everything that I've given them
They have managed to destroy.
Great abundance of these things I gave
To work with and to enjoy.

There is a disturbance over there.
I'll note what is being said.
What is this? I can't believe it!
My children think that I am dead.

Well, somehow I expected all of this,
Though I'll admit not quite so soon.
What worries me now is that they are leaving earth
And are landing on my moon.

Honorable Mention
Lane College

Nathaniel Brown

AN ENCOUNTER WITH LONELINESS

I arrived in town on Sunday,
The sun was shining bright,
By the time I was assigned
quarters,
Day had turned to night.

I arose the next morning,
Feeling good and free,
Then I felt an alien presence,
But him, I could not see.

I went about the town,
Taking in the sights,
I felt his presence again,
And he gave me a fright.

I returned to my room that
evening,
Tired and wanting to rest,
There he stood in the corner,
His arms folded across his chest.

I asked him what he wanted,
Or just what was his game,
He just smiled and said to me,
"Loneliness is my name."

Walking down the lane,
Or in my empty room,
Loneliness is every present
And with him now is gloom.

He walks with me daily,
Morning, noon or night,
Taunting, teasing, humiliating me,
With all of his might.

When I return to my home,
And see my love's face,
Loneliness will have to go,
And find another place.

First Place
Union University

Bill Greer

EPITAPH

The world about me has not staggered its pace.
The people drive by with work on their minds.
The birds fly by with nothing on theirs.
The only silent thing is the stained
Glass window through which the
Sun looks across the skies at the earth.
Soon, even that will melt into
Silver spiracles of night and . . . I'll die.
I have trickled down the stream—
Through its clear pools;
Over its grains of sand;
Beneath its towering trees of birth, growth, splendor, and death;
And into its vast ocean.
I have become but one drop in
The perpetual structure of life.
I have realized. I have tried.
Who knows whether I have succeeded or failed?

Second Place
Union University

Paul Moore

AS I SIT ALONE

As I sit alone
In this crowded place,
I see hundreds of people,
None with a face.

They've said it all,
It's all been done;
No battles fought;
No battles won.

As I sit alone
In this crowded way,
I see hundreds of people
With nothing to say.

But if there's no conflict
And if there's no strife,
What then is living?
Tell me,
What then is life?

LEGACY

The road down by the water, all but one crooked bend, was hidden because the farmhouse sat at right angles to the Tennessee River on a bluff. From where he was hiding in the elderberry bushes at the end of the porch, Dave could see the doctor's Model T chugging slowly up the rutted lane and pointing upgrade before it disappeared behind a stand of pine.

The fear swamped him again, striking at the hollow of his stomach, a lost, bewildered terror that drew him into a knot. He grabbed fistfuls of damp earth and buried his face in the tufts of bulbs sticking out of the flower bed.

I can pray, he thought. Till he comes. Won't do no harm.

He shut his eyes and thought a while about Sunday school and the Lord coming in a cloud of smoke and fire right down to the barnyard fence he was skinning only a few moments—hours—ago. The image got mixed up with Brother Jenkins at camp meeting. Brother Jenkins preached brimstone and the bottomless pit every night, no matter what, and he shook his fists at the big boys on the back row. Dave squirmed a bit, kneeling and remembering. When he heard the gate click he sprang to his feet.

Swinging his little bag, Doc scurried up the walk. Dave grabbed him around the knees.

"Oh, Doc! Ma—she's dying! Do something, Doc!"

He hadn't known the spindly little man was so strong. Firm fingers pried him away, and he was flung to the ground without a word. The doctor cleared the porch in one long step and disappeared into the house.

"She's goin', honey." Cousin Dossie had said a while ago. She loosened Dave's hand from Ma's limp one, so still. He never remembered Ma's hands being quiet before.

"The best friend you boys ever had is leavin' you. Might as well know. Doc cain't do nothin' but sign the paper."

Dave hadn't believed Cousin Dossie. He never did. She was always telling things worse than they were. He'd looked up at Pa.

Sam was standing there, looking as if the Day of Judgment had come, and he wasn't ready. But he wasn't ever ready for anything, Dave thought. Her going no more than anything else.

He crawled on hands and knees back under Ma's bedroom window, where he listened hard. In the late August afternoon the air was stifling, and bugs were flying everywhere, bumping the screen softly.

The voices were soft, resigned, without strain at last, as if those inside were minding something beyond themselves, something that had to do with Ma. It was almost as if all of them, one at a time, were in Ma's place on the carved walnut bed under the blue counterpane. It was like they were offering Ma to whatever it was new in the room, to stave it off from their own selves, as they promised each other to put her away good.

Shushed whispers drifted out to him as he lay there. He shivered, even though sweat was running down his armpits and staining his shirt.

"A shame those boys . . . bright . . . Sam don't know what to do, never did . . . she worked too hard, look at them hands . . . Ain't it hot? . . . How'll he pay for the funeral? . . . I'll make the shroud myself. . . ."

The last was Cousin Dossie's voice. She was taking charge, as everyone expected her to.

Felix, his hound, gave a low howl, and Dave laid his face across the smooth liver and white coat, and smeared his tears dry. It was true, as he had known all along. *Ma was gone.*

I ain't cryin' for her, he thought. For me, maybe. Not her.

He got stiffly to his feet and went around the house to the back porch. He sat down on the edge near where the water bucket and the gourd dipper hung.

His father came out, finally. Sam's face, bearded, sharp-honed, was twisted into odd pieces that hung separate and apart from each other. His feet looked as though they didn't know where he wanted them put, only they were raising up and going down anyhow. He didn't see Dave right off. They looked beyond each other. Sam spoke to himself.

"Could a' called Doc yestiddy just as well. He said her heart failed her. Never thought she was so bad. The crisis was 'sposed to be over. Boy, what we goin' to do?"

It was the first time in years his father had put an arm around him. Dave felt funny. He sat, saying nothing, wondering why it was he couldn't cry, with Pa there. Ma wouldn't want him to cry, big fourteen-year-old. Calling him out of the nest fast as a mother quail. She never let him be, always thinking he could do better than Sam, or even Adam, when all he wanted was for her to leave him alone.

She made him kill a chicken, though he'd screamed and stomped and said he wouldn't. She'd got a switch on him and held out corn to the big Dominecker pullet in her long, rough hand. She'd put his fingers on the red comb, all velvety soft, and showed him how to hold the head tight and whirl the kicking, squawking body round and round. He'd opened his fist at last, and there was the pale bill gasping, and then quiet, and he'd turned and run behind the henhouse to be sick.

He wasn't brave. His fingers trembled on the barrel of his gun every time the chicken yard was raided by a fox, or they needed squirrel or rabbit for meat. When he could, he'd beg Adam to do the killing. Wild, shy creatures pleaded with him silently, sniffing enemy air; one glimpse, or a quick darting movement was enough to make him turn aside. They had a right, he thought. But Ma kept chipping at him.

"You'll have to stand on your own two feet, you and Adam," she'd said three days ago. She had turned her head toward the window, to the yellow river flowing down below.

"There's something comin', way off from now—something to do with this here Tennessee. But it ain't in your time. You got to git away. You got to go to school."

Her thunder-blue eyes had been filmed over, with a far-off look in them. Adam said it was the fever. But Dave knew Ma was seeing ahead.

It was what she had always been able to do, like she had a little peephole into what was coming, and could see from there back again to where they were now. She could figure good bargains, if they'd only had the money, find a likely place for a crossroads store, or a good-lying farm, seize on a room in the barn for old furniture ladies traded her for eggs. Ma said some day those walnut and cherry dressers and chests folks were painting white or varnishing black would be worth money, real money. But his father had to see it like it was in writing, and big writing at that, foot-high letters straight in front of him to stumble over, before he'd believe. So he wouldn't agree to give her part of the barn, or his blacksmith shop, or send off for the special kind of

laying chickens. Ma had wanted them so bad. He remembered Pa tearing up the order, the page in the catalogue damp with her tears, his own blind, helpless anger. He wondered how Pa felt now. He guessed he'd never know.

Sam left when the undertaker appeared in the square, black hearse. Dave sat still, looking out toward the river. It was as though part of him was churning along in the muddy current, trying to catch up with Ma, who was there too, a little farther downstream, out of sight. Ma had been like the river, restless, wanting to get out of a sluggish pattern, and go somewhere. And he the same. Right here they had flailed and boiled, the three of them, hankering after whatever there was beyond.

He got up and put his hands in his overall pockets. No use looking for Adam. His brother had taken a shotgun and headed for the woods, his cure for whatever ailed him, big or little. He walked slowly toward the orchard. Felix, happy to be moving, ran beside him and flushed a mockingbird. She scolded him harshly for upsetting her young, till Dave shooed her away.

They reached the rows of trees. Ankle deep in grass, he picked up and bit a late Indian peach, good only for pickling, but sweetened by the sun and ready to burst. The red juice dribbled down his chin. A lizard darted over the rough bark of a hanging limb. He put out a hand, wanting to feel something, anything, before the pain cut his insides again.

"Dave-ee!"

It was Cousin Dossie's high, whiney voice coming through the back screen. Now she was banging the door on her run-over heels. She had put on a starched apron. Her hands were on her bony hips. He hated the square, freckled face, the red hair slicked into a topknot, most of all her bossy, old-maid ways.

"Git me five chickens killed quick! Be fifteen here for supper. I ain't got time to waste, Davey, so you mind me good, you hear?"

He shut his eyes to the sight of her. She went back in the house, and he turned to feel the stillness one last time, the scarey quiet that hung around the beehives, the barn, the woodshed, like Sunday, only worse. He went in the shed then, and got a double handful of corn and the big axe. He lifted the hasp of the chicken yard gate and kicked at the pecking Domineckers, finally grabbing one big bird by the feet. Holding the squawking fowl in one hand, the axe firmly in the other, he chopped its head off neatly right there on the ground. Blood spattered on his overalls. Behind the fence Felix barked and snuffed.

Now he'd have Cousin Dossie around; maybe she'd marry Pa, even. Anyway, he could shrug her off and go about a man's business, like Adam. Give her no never mind. She wasn't Ma.

He went on with the grim business doggedly until he had five feathered bodies lying limply side by side on the chopping block, cooling. Cousin Dossie'd make him pick them, and he'd better be quick. But instead he stood looking down at them. Funny how Ma'd been closer, him killing those chickens, than she'd been all this long day.

Where are you, Ma? Where?

The knowledge, when it came was not an answer. The barbed wire bit into his flesh as he clung, sobbing, till at last he let himself be borne somewhere, any old where, maybe to a place that would be his and his alone, world without end, amen. When he took his hands away, he had no pain.

No pain at all, but he knew he could do what had to be done for living. Whatever it was.

ALWAYS THE QUEEN

With her navy defeated,
Antony fallen on his sword
and a gloating new Caesar
at the city gate,
Cleopatra envisioned the end.
She ordered her maidens
to bathe her in fragrance,
clothe her with purple,
crown her with gold
and place the asp on her breast.

Alone—remote—safe at last—
she awaits his coming,
the Caesar—with sharp chagrin
and Roman curses.
Safe at last—to dream of
the opening of lotus buds
and silent flooding of the Nile.

Never the captive—always the captor,
never the conquered—always the queen:
belonging to no man—always to Egypt—
to TIME—and to FAME.

Eddie Lee Anthony Smith

THE PREDATOR

Clutching the rim of his aerie,
head high and taut,
eagle eyes comb the valley.

His mate hungers
and nestlings gape their red throats
begging food.

Far below him something stirs—
a rabbit—
its flesh soft and sweet.

Like an arrow driven by bowstring
he flies—
beak and claws savage
to the bone.

Edna Lackie

ASTROLOGICAL PREDICTIONS

My horoscope has got the best of me.
No more am I footloose and fancy free.
There's danger that besets my every way.
I must be careful what I buy today.
Extremely careful what I have to say.
In fact according to what I just read
I should stay home and spend the day in
bed.
Aquarians are such a sorry lot!
They don't have pitchers, but . . .
A great big water pot!

BALLADES FRANCAISES BY PAUL FORT, 1954

Chanson du va-et-vient du vent Song of the come-and-go wind

Sur ma joue un baiser.
Oui, le vent passe.
Sur ma joue nulle trace
du vent passé.

On my cheek a kiss.
Yes, the wind passes.
On my cheek no trace
of the passing wind.

Sur ta joue un baiser.
Oui, le vent passe.
Sur la joue nulle trace
du vent glissé.

On your cheek a kiss.
Yes, the wind passes.
On your cheek no trace
of the glancing wind.

Sur nos joues un baiser.
Oui, le vent passe.
Sur nos joues nulle trace
du vent glacé.

On our cheeks a kiss.
Yes, the wind passes.
On our cheeks no trace
of the chilling wind.

*En regardant le ciel
Dialogue avant le crepuscule*

“Bergere, que vois-tu dans le ciel bas et haut?”
“Passant, tu ne vois pas, ce soir, comme il est beau?”
“Je le vois jaune d’or, bleu de lin, rouge et vert.
Oui, bergere, admirable!” – “Et n’est que l’envers.”

*While looking at the sky
Dialog before dawn*

“Shepherd, what do you see in the sky from bottom to top?”
“Stranger, don’t you see how beautiful it is this evening?”
“I see it golden yellow, linen blue, red and green.
Yes, shepherd, admirable!”
“And this is only the wrong side.”

Excerpt from JUNGFRAU VON ORLEANS
BY JOHAN C. F. SCHILLER

Höre mich, Gott, in meiner höchsten not!
Hinauf zu dir, in heizem Flehenswunsch,
In deine Himmel send' ich meine Seele.
Du kannst die Fäden eines Spinngewebs
Stark machen wie die Taue eines Schiffs,
Leicht ist es deines Allmacht, ehre Bande
In dünnes Spinngewebe zu verwandeln . .
Du willst und diese Ketten fallen ab,

Und diese Turnwand spaltet sich . . . du halfst
Dem Simson, denn er blind war und gefesselt
Und seiner stolzen Feinde bitterm Spott
Erduldete . . . Auf dich vertrauend faszt'er
Die Pfosten seines Kerkers mächtig an
Und neigte sich und sturzte das Gebäude.

—Act. V, Scene II

[Johanna (Joan of Arc) has been imprisoned by her enemies. She is in a high tower overlooking the battlefield where the power of the newly crowned King of France is being tested. The battle is going against the King's forces.]

Johanna prays:

Hear me; O God, in this my sorest need
Up into Thee in fervent, humble prayer
Into Thy heaven I send my longing soul
Thou canst make the tiny threads of spider's
web

Strong as the cables of a mighty ship . .
Easy is it to Almighty power divine
To turn these fetters into spider's web,
Be it thy will, these chains could fall away
These heavy tower doors could open wide.

Thou didst help Samson when he sightless,
 chained
The bitter sport of his proud enemies
 endured-then trusting only Thee he
 grasped firm columns of his prison
 mightily
And bowed himself and overthrew the whole . .

The Soldier shouts
"Triumph, Victory
The King is taken"

Johanna
"O God, be gracious to me!"

[She seizes her chains with both hands and tears them away. In a moment she snatches a sword from the astonished soldier and races down the tower stairs to the battlefield.]

Spencerian Sonnet

Dr. Sarah V. Clement

DROUTH

The burning sun is rising on the earth
Parched with the many days of lack of rain
Grass, flowers, grain no longer come to birth
When will a verdant meadow grow again?
Harsh hours of drought and burning heat in train
Have made men fear that fire might well consume
The earth and sweep away those racked with pain
Each lurid hour predicting coming doom
If now above a shining cloud finds room
All eyes behold it with a transient hope
Dispelled when fiercer still sun's rays illume
Fields, homesteads, dry brook beds and mountain slope
How great the joy to hear deep thunder's voice
How all in presence of rain rejoice.

TRIBES THAT SLUMBER

Before the Roman state assumed its sway,
Before the conquests Alexander made
The woodland cultures knew their simple way
In Tennessee's primeval forest shade.

Near graceful trees on hills, in glades arose
Memorials built to mark man's mortal day
Where with their tools the Indians found repose
Returned at last to the estranged clay.

Gone are the frailer objects of man's care,
Gone are the dwelling places once most dear
In the fair sunshine and the fresh, cool air
Beside the river bank and waters clear,

Gone are the songs, the drums, the battle sounds,
Yet left to present years remain the mounds.

DIFFUGERE NIVES

The days pass on how swiftly in their flight;
Winter will pass and summer come again;
The honeysuckle blossom in the lane
And climbing roses weave their garlands bright.

Yet not the flowers of summer nor the light
That radiant shines on hill and distant plain
Can take away the thoughts of winter's rain
Or blot remembered storm clouds from the sight.

So love in happiness remembers grief
And days of doubt and fear when joy departs
And all things threaten to divide true hearts
Or raze the strong foundations of belief.

Yet if through days of testing love abide
Then nothing can the lovers' hearts divide.

Kathryn W. Robbins

Sonnet: TO AGED THOUGHTS

Why must you taunt me with a slivered trace
Of past delights since you no longer rule
The old familiar lines? And though I school
My wits to play the nonchalant, your pace
For nimble jest is gone, and I must face
Confusion, bear the brunt of ridicule
And hold to stumbling incoherent tool
Of slender threads that time did not erase.

Yet, should I find that in the hallowed field
Of reminiscence, I could be content
With half-remembering and know it lends
A rich reward in full abandonment
Of pride, perhaps the rim of years could yield
To life's fulfillment, shaping highest ends.

Kathryn W. Robbins

ATALANTA

Atalanta, swift of foot and beautiful
To see, did golden pellets at your feet
Deflect you from the race? Or did you see
From out the guarded pillow of your eye
The handsome one, Melanion join the chase
And choose to lose—be won by him who used
His head to match your heels? Or did you take
Advice from older wiser heads who knew
That youth and beauty both were fleet and soon,
Too soon—the chase would be reversed and you
No longer chased—would chaser be and then
Too late—your heart would overtake your heels?

Kathryn W. Robbins

Sonnet: DRY STICKS

Why did the wind in wooded favor, seek
Them out in early twig-hood, call them down
From reaching skyward—down to earth and break
The wonderment of greening? Denied the crown
Of mating branch and swing of cradled nest,
Unquickened by the raindrop plaudit: they
Are stowed beneath the elders—there to rest
Upon ten thousand autumns of decay.
Yet, through the alchemy of soil, they bloom
Again in maple, beech and pine and oak.
Or chosen early, warm the children's room
And small they turn to ashes, soot and smoke
And in a laughing curling mist, defy
The tallest timbered fields and tip the sky.

Kathryn W. Robbins

THE CYCLUS

I find
No words can frame
First love as bright as sun.
The touch of hungry lips
Is there, but words
Are gone

I find
No words to heal
The hurt when love is done.
How well I know the break
Is there, but words
Are gone.

THE PROTESTERS

Waves

oceanic borne
leaping high
Ten thousand tons abreast
defiant—foaming—
through gold magenta mist
they move.

Whirling

in a welter
of water wildness
they storm the beach.

They beat

their strength
against the stony ledge,
drop the drift
while thirsty sands
drink up the foam.

Then

they return again
to chaos
in a whirlpool
of unknowing.

Elizabeth White Sevier

TABLES TURNED

Joe White burned a flag and then said
“The RED, WHITE and BLUE is now dead!”
A plane he hi-jacked
In Cuba was sacked
Young WHITE is now BLUE and a RED!

Mae Elliott

THE PROMISE

On the chancel rail
I saw a vase of mixed flowers.
Pure and white were the tuberoses
and I thought of the love and purity
of my Savior.
The green leaves reminded me
of cool, green pastures—
where I could find peace and rest.
The yellow marigold brought to mind Judas,
who betrayed His Master
for the sum of thirty pieces of silver.
The golden dahlias told me
that His was a heart of gold.
Crimson zinnias stood taller than the rest;
I could see in their petals
drops of blood
as He hung between two thieves
on the cross.
His outstretched arms pleaded with me
to place my hand in His
And I bowed my head in promise

Mae Elliott

HARPS OF THE WIND

A tree
outside my window
stripped bare—
her body washed clean with winter rain.
Suddenly, the sun
among drifts of clouds, cast rays
on naked boughs where
heavy raindrops clung.

Now—she wears diamonds
pure—
resplendent—as she dances
to the singing harps of the wind.
Then—loud and louder
the wind blows—until
it becomes a raucous wail
like staccato beat of
a thousand drums.

The young tree
gyrating fiercely in rhythm
sheds her diamonds in haste
upon the carpet at her feet—
turned golden in the sun—.
As suddenly as it started,
the singing harps are silent,
the sun retreats behind the clouds
and the tree is still.

Juanita Sikes Young

THIS IS NO COMPLEX WORLD

This is no complex world.
It is a world of simple things:

-A tree silhouetted against the sky
At evening when the sun
Steps down each rung
Of time's ladder.
-A mahogany acorn
Wearing a toboggan.
-Old beech trees kneeling
Into some leaf filled stream.
-A handful of stars
On an October night.

....Wood smoke curling from
A farm house chimney.
....Daffodils blooming
In the snow.
....The red breast of a robin.

This is no complex world.
It is a world of simple things,
Where hope and faith are companions.
Please . . . leave it undisturbed.

Juanita Sikes Young

UNTITLED

The night is silent as a moonbeam.
I can close my eyes and almost
Hear the snowflakes falling.
In the kaleidoscope of man's activities,
How does God ripen moments
That slow us down
That leaves the trees untouched . . .
That ease the weariness of the soul?

Moments . . . like these . . .
When all the world is still
And only silence fills the air . . .
Are moments when angels walk on earth
To renew our strength . . .
And restore our faith again
In tomorrow . . . and our Maker.

WILD DUCK SWIMMING

I saw a wild duck swimming
in the waters of the river.
I stood upon the beach,
where bits of wood and weed
were scattered in the sand;
I whistled to the swimming one
it came in closer until I
could almost touch it
with my hands
yet, despite my coaxing
would not come ashore.
I went away
and left it swimming
there, alone
trying to understand its fear
but knew no words to say
to prove I was a friend.

I found you in a crowded room
where people laughed
and you . . .
yet, I knew you were a lonely one
(a lonely one can tell)
I knew you wore a mask . . .
pretending, trying to forget
one who tried to hurt you.
I watched you leave
as I had seen the wild duck go.
Helplessly, I searched to find
a word or way to let you know
I felt and understood
the loneliness I knew
was in your heart.

Robert T. Parker

RETRIBUTION

Like to an ancient Druid
clothed in mystic robes,
I stand so close beside
the castle's tower
watching slashing rain,
a darkened sky . . .
I listen to the wind
and watch the bolts of lightning
hurtling through space
with the fury of a valkyrie
loosing her anger
upon a helpless world.
I laugh . . .
because her fury
must be spent
within the hour;
for then the earth and I,
though drenched beyond description,
will join hands and laugh aloud
together.

Robert T. Parker

MADNESS

What did I do today?
I paused within the crowded slums
and whispered to a man
whose skin was black
"Today is the day for liberation!
Rise up and strike and take
what is yours.
Come, let me light your torch.
Let's burn and loot, destroy
and kill.

The white man hates your guts!
He wants to make you slave again
to do his work and every whim.
Cry 'Black Power.' Burn it
to the ground. I'll stand beside
you while we watch destruction."

I whispered to a white man near:
"Rise up and bring your gun.
These blacks are but angry beasts
who want to burn and steal.
Bring tear gas and water hose and dogs.
Kill if you must. Remember
switch blade knives, the chain and club,
the brick, the bottles and the stones.
Beat him down. Club him. Fill the jail.
Show him who's boss."

Silently I crept away; enthralled
with all the hate my words set fire.
I love to watch a riot—
broken windows, looting, stealing, burning,
screams of the fleeing ones.
"Kill the whitey," I cried from the alley dark.
"Kill the Negro," I whispered
moments later on the street.
Smoke, sirens, flames, confusion!

For hours I roamed the streets
where looted buildings burned.
The soldiers came; there was a silence
and a calm. Debris and water filled the streets.

This has been a good night.
I must remember to do a repeat performance
in Detroit, Newark, Memphis,
Chicago, Akron, Harlem or St. Louis.
Now I must sleep.
I sleep well when I have finished.
I am madness.
Wake me tomorrow.

Lisa Richardson

JOY VS. SORROW

Sorrow unlike happiness, is limited.
For with this constant burden,
Mankind would surely die
And sorrow with it.

But in happiness, mankind thrives.
Joy is passed
From one to another
And through this exultant patter, lives!

Mark Burns

254-74-1509

Clicking, clicking, wheels enfolding,
Semi-processed factors holding,
Folding digits' data locked,
Magnetic cycles stocked
Like marbles on a glazier's beach.
Circuit sweepers, whistling, reach
To wire organs, zircon cells;
Transistors heat; the current swells;
Filaments and fibers glow;
Its life continues so.
Unceasing vigil thus performed
To weave the net of uniform
Information and combine
To whole the parts no human eyes can see
Nor fear of man define.

Mark Burns

CYCLOPS

Cyclops, why do you not die?
We waited for your sleep—
But you never sleep.

A burning stake we rammed into your eye;
You laughed and manufactured
A hundred, a thousand, a million more—
All blue, all glowing.

Now we cannot sleep.

Oh Cyclops, have mercy upon us.
Bash out our brains and devour us;
Howl your fury; tear flesh from bone.
But do not sit in silence,
Glowing into our helpless souls
Until we are your prisoners.
Your slaves, forever.

Mark Burns

NATIONAL SECURITY

“The orchard is dying . . .”
—These, the words from the gaping-mouthed hired man—
“Right now, sir; come and see.”

Such things, I told myself, do not happen.
The man is drunk and shall be fired
For his indolence.

But then, standing in the blackened fields,
Staring at the leaves—all green evaporated,
Turned to powdery brown,
Crumbling in the wind—
Fruit shriveled, burned—

I could not speak to silence him.

"Dead, all dead; the orchard,

Flowers, grass,

All dead."

Three days and the Army man arrived.

An accident, he said;

Testing defoliants fifty miles away;

Something broke; these things happen now and then;

Would I make out an estimate and fill out

These forms . . .?

Yes, I'd do that.

So he left, and I stood very still,

Clutching the screen door,

Holding the triplicate papers;

I watched him leave,

Then gazed at my silent, trembling wife,

At the baby gurgling and cooing in her arms.

In the orchard neither bird nor insect spoke;

No life stirred the empty wind.

Ruby Jourdan Hillix

OUR PLUM TREE

Our plum tree is a foolish thing

That does not know the season,

It blossoms anytime at all

Without rhyme or reason.

Everytime we have a storm

And snow is falling down,

Each tiny twig and crooked branch

Has a snowy blossom for a crown!

But as the Winter season wanes,

And Spring is here, to our delight,

We gaze in rapture, for you see

Our plum tree blossomed over night!

THE MOMENT

Once
a perfect moment came to me,
rare and special,
lighting my heart
and filling it with love.
I saw that the world was beautiful—
And my joy went forth in song.

On that day, I knew you cared.
In memory the wonder lingers,
of how a moment
of such perfection
could possibly come to me.
The charm, the joy, the ecstasy,
Seemed more than I could bear.

But that was THEN—and this is NOW.
The years we shared have come between.
Today I sing no song—
The moment and you are gone.

Charles T. Stanfill

CITY IN THE RAIN

On a rainy Atlanta street corner
In the gray morning drip of awnings
And umbrellas, the people clustered thick
At the bus stop. Their eyes
Were watching. The cars stopped. Red lights turned green.
They surged across the oily puddles,
To other streets, other sidewalks,
The corpuscles of the great city:
Black or white faces with a million thoughts,
A million dreaming Georgians,

Enough to fill a million novels.
Overhead the tall buildings plowed the clouds
With light-seeding furrows in the streaming mist
As one by one the rectangles of business
Lit up brilliant in the opal sky.
Some of the people looked to see; some did not,
But the city they built was there,
Founded by their muscle, the wonder of their minds,
And each caught the heart-beat of Atlanta that day,
Of the city that glistened in the rain.

Velma Huie

MICHAEL

He is young and happy
small and agile,
knowing little grief—
he smiles and whistles
as he works.

“A job is a job,” he says
and a job is important, too,
to a boy named Michael—
who smiles and whistles
as he works.

He mows my lawn in summer,
delivers my paper when it snows.
No matter what the weather
outside—he smiles and whistles
as he works.

ODE TO DEFENSELESS PUPILS

Not long ago, I learned with dismay
That teachers actually get PAY!!
But I believe that they their duties shirk;
They pick the problem; but we do the work!

All those dates and deeds are past
From Henry the First to Henry the Last;
And yet we're expected to memorize
Those history books with our poor sleepy eyes!

After hearing these facts, you surely agree
With my fellow-sufferers of schoolwork,
That if we don't get a vacation,
We'll all go berserk!

Honor Burney

MINI

I looked down the street
Saw a little fat girl comin'.
The Mini-skirt fooled me,
She was a fat little woman.

AND THEN I SAW THE HALO!

I discovered at an early age that all angels are not invisible spectors with oversized wings, and that the good ones do not always fly around in long, white robes keeping people out of trouble. Once in a while, you get a glimpse of one right here on this 'ole' earth. They come in all sorts of sizes and forms and turn up at the most unexpected times. Before this discovery, the mysterious, unseen places of heaven and hell, and their occupants, had begun to cause me considerable thought—and sometimes nightmares—and had also caused my elders much exasperation when they found out they weren't smart enough to answer all my questions. I have seen angels since, but the first time I remember getting a good look at one was on a warm, autumn night in the frontyard of my grandparents' home in South Georgia.

Grandpa and one of my uncles had left the farm early that morning with a load of cotton. The trip to town in the two-horse wagon took 'pretty near' all day, but I could tell that grandma was getting mighty worried when sundown came and they had not gotten home. She was restless and made many trips to the front room to look at the clock on the mantel. Finally she sat down at the old organ and, though no sound came from the instrument, with one finger picked out notes and sang an old hymn. This did not surprise me for I had seen her do this many times. Grandma loved music and had inherited the old dilapidated organ from her mother. Not being able to play it herself, she had hoped that one of her eight children would be gifted in this way. This had not been the case. Lean years and the cost of rearing a large family had left no money for teachers. The first thing she would ask an unknown visitor was, "Do you play the organ?" and if the answer was yes, she stopped any task to listen. No matter how bad the performance her comment was always, "Oh, that's so fine, so fine!"

At last the organ began to come apart. The straps to the foot pedals became shreds, the reeds and pipes fell. The knobs, that were such fun for small hands to pull, came out. The traveling 'piany-man' only shook his head and advised grandma to take it to the junkpile. I saw grandpa give grandma a little pat on the shoulder as she wiped her eyes with the bottom of her apron.

And so it sat in its corner in the "front-room", a reminder of an unfulfilled dream, but grandma kept it dusted and at times as on this night, would pick out the silent notes and sing.

Finally, she decided we had kept our vigil long enough and it was time for the family to be in bed. Whimpering, I gave in, but did not relish the idea of lying in the dark, even with two young aunts for bed fellows. An angel from heaven or hell might be hovering near!

I was just letting go of that last resistance to consciousness, when I was jerked awake by the most beautiful sound I had ever heard. Music came out of the blackness of the night. I sat up in bed in terror! Surely Gabriel had come down to earth and brought all his heavenly choir with him!

I grabbed the tail of one of my aunt's nightgown as all three of us scrambled out of bed. I held on until we reached the hall where we were caught up in the rush of my other uncles and aunts heading for the front door. Grandma led them, holding a kerosene lamp above her head. When we reached the front porch we could see by the feeble light, a big, dark-colored box. It sat upright in the middle of the sandy yard. From this came the music! Grandpa and my uncle were dancing a little jig and laughing loudly. Amazed and relieved, I stopped on the top doorstep taking in the scene, as the rest of the family swarmed into the yard. The faint sound of rattling chains came from the direction of the pasture gate and I knew the horses had been tied there so the music box could be carried stealthily up to the house.

Above the laughter and the music, I heard grandpa holler, "Children, this is yer ma's. Now, she can have music all the time!" He stopped dancing and reached out, dirty and sweaty in faded over-alls and denim shirt, to put an arm around the tiny woman in the white nightgown.

And then I saw the halo! From grandma's lamp, raised high in the darkness, the light streamed in a perfect circle around grandpa's balding head. Grandma's white gown enveloped him as she put her free arm around his waist and laid her head on his chest. The revolving disc inside the box stopped and I heard her ask in a happy voice, quivering with tears, "Ain't he an angel?"

I thought that even grandma should know the answer to that question and I started laughing, too, because if all angels were like my grandpa, I had nothing to worry about.

Since that wonderful revelation, I have seen a few angels . . . and as I said in the beginning, they come in all sorts of sizes and forms and turn up at the oddest places at the most unexpected times!

D. C. Berry

From THE TENANTS

(The following three poems are selected from a volume of poetry, "The Tenants" by D. C. Berry, of Knoxville, Tennessee, and here published for the first time. The volume includes a poem on the administration of each American president from George Washington through Lyndon Baines Johnson. These three have been chosen to give the flavor of the work—The Editors)

JAMES BUCHANAN (1857-1861)

Like Willy Loman and King
Lear, etc . . .

I was misunderstood
(and I was a bachelor too);

Was a log cabin boy
from Cove Gap soil
and never married
at all!!!

—Still there was no peace
with Harper's ferry
and the Dred Scott Case;
maybe I should have married.

"Dear Abby; should I have married?"—James.

"Dear James; you had enough trouble, didn't you?"—Abby.

If Hamlet comes by here
have him dig up the relics of me
and see
if they could stand any
more trouble,
if so,

I'll come back to life
and take a wife,
Cuba,
Mexico,
and tell Ho Chi Minh's friends
where the hell to go.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1861-1865)

Indians killed grandpa;
I was born in a log, as you know,
cabin on Nolin Creek;
went to school a year;
to the Army 80 days.

Time (or trouble) passed . . .

Without Right
I blockaded the Southern ports,
enlarged the Army, and
suspended habeas corpus
for the first time in 600 years;

and it all drove Mary
Crazy
(I killed three of her Rebel
brothers with malice
toward none and charity)
and the South back to us.

Time (or trouble) passed . . .

I went back tailored to
a 6foot 4inch tidy coffin.

John Kennedy went back
too . . . and his brother Bobby . . .

Time (or trouble) passes . . .

all is forgotten
all is repeated

or do I but
dream a dream
of dreams
of dreams
of dreams.

D. C. Berry

HARRY S. TRUMAN (1945-1953)

In 18
days Hitler, Mussolini and
Rossevelt died and left me
in
charge of US
—just Bess and me
and

all I ever wanted was a career
in Music.

I fought
Labor and North Korea
—took Labor and took
North Korea awhile
(several times I said things I didn't mean I said).

(From the little news the
little earthworms bring
I understand the Pueblo's crew's
still out on the long limb
that grew
out twelve miles or so
it seems
Hell Missouri
ain't even got limbs that long!)

I don't know how much
the North Korean War cost,
but we paid it out on Time—
the 136,000 Casualty Plan.

I think we paid it out . . .

VISITANT

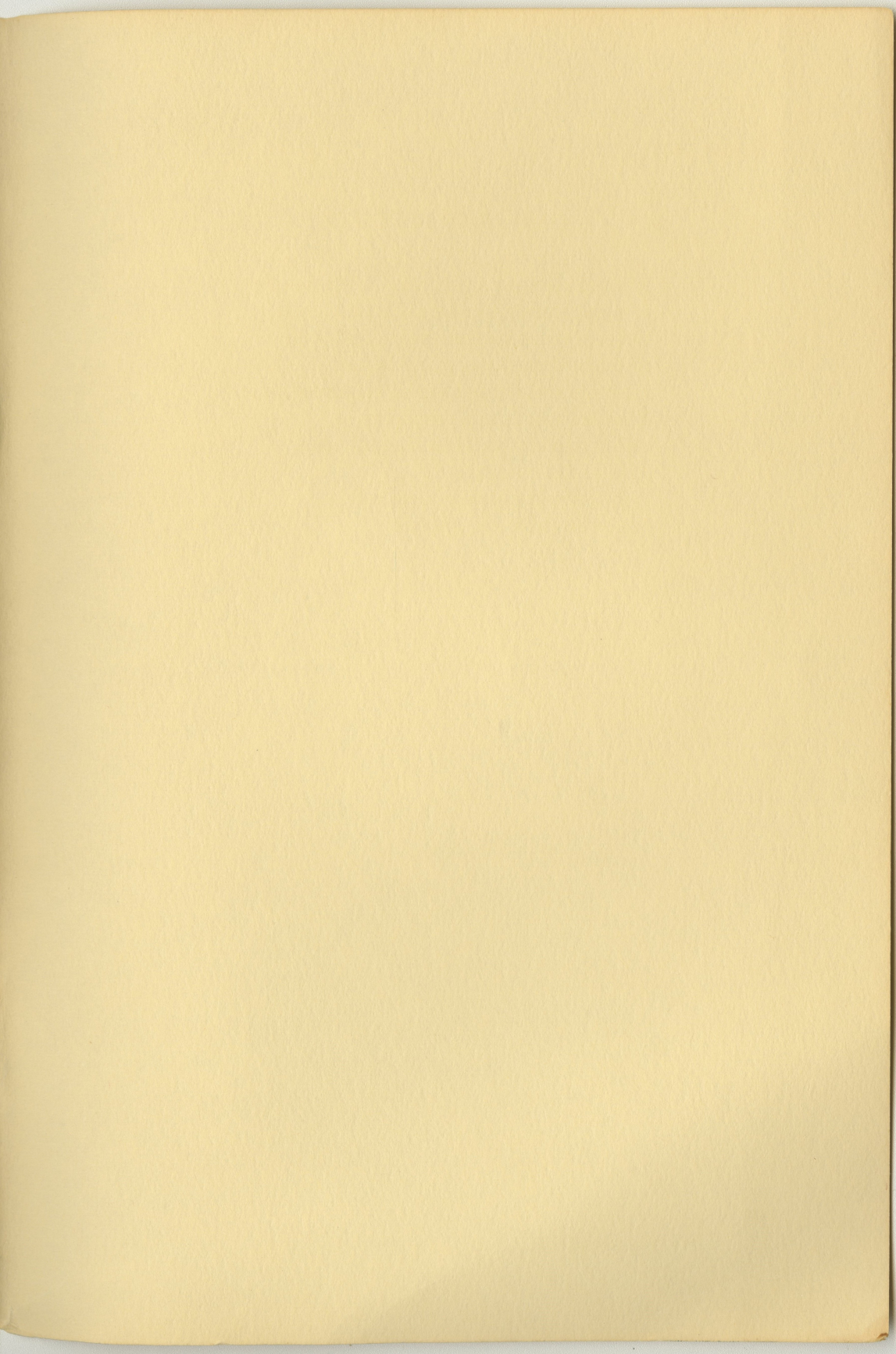
At first it was as though
someone, creeping up from the left,
sensing his awareness and too slow
to escape unseen, flashed
momently on the retina,
there and then vanished
as he turned to see.
Then, his gaze fixed
ahead once more—
guerilla-like, the stalker
crept again to the edge of vision.

After a time of caution
and instant retreat,
the presence, grown reluctant now,
began to slouch, not flit, away.
At last, one October Sunday,
it slowed, turned, stopped
and would not leave for
tears or thunder
and would not speak
or acknowledge that wonder
proffered by those who dared to peek.

Gerald Duff

TIME OF FRATERNITY

In the long slow afternoons of the young
it is not through indirection they exist,
but in a pivot swoon upon a still point
of grace there for a space of first
martinis and tanned legs in patterned hose.
Wars are words in newspapers
and images on McLuhan's cool tube.
Life to the contrary
only a few are slender and holy,
and even these are suspect.



LAYCOOK. JACKSON